

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling insertion of a plurality of local spots into a program feed through a central site server located at a central control site, the method comprising:

prior to playout of the program feed, distributing the plurality of local spots from the central site server to one or more remote site servers located at one or more corresponding remote sites relative to the central control site;

sending a plurality of control parameters from the central site server to each of the one or more remote site servers, the plurality of control parameters including one or more parameters specifying requirements for availability of the local spots on the central site server to the one or more remote servers to allow playout of the local spots, the control parameters including a playtime lookahead window parameter that sets a time period requirement before the scheduled playout of a local spot at which time each of the remote site servers checks to report to the central server a local spot missing at the remote site server;

transmitting the program feed from the central site server to each of the one or more remote site servers; and

each of the remote site servers automatically switching between playout of the program feed and playout of each local spot in accordance with the plurality of control parameters received from the central site server located at the central control site.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein:
the program feed comprises one of a cable feed or a network feed; and
each local spot comprises one of local advertising or a local announcement.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the central site server is in communication with each of the remote site servers through a plurality of types of distribution network links, wherein the program feed is transmitted via one type of network link, and the local spots are distributed via a different type of network link.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein one of the types of network links is a terrestrial link and the other of the types of network links is a satellite link.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, wherein sending a plurality of control parameters includes sending uplink parameters, scheduler parameters, and storage parameters for controlling distribution of the program feed and the plurality of local spots from the central site server to each of the one or more remote site servers through the distribution network.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein:

the uplink parameters include one or more of an uplink broadcast transmission, an uplink forward, or an uplink look-ahead;

the scheduler parameters include one or more of a transmission lookahead window, a staging lookahead window, a station in a box (SIB) playtime lookahead window, an SIB spot high water mark, an SIB spot low water mark, a searchable length of transmit queue, a searchable length of a staging queue, a playlist transmission lookahead, a minimum transmit time, an SIB timeout limit, a history retention period; and

the storage parameters include one or more of playlist entries, purgelist entries, a playlist retention period, a purgelist retention, a dead on arrival (DOA) retention period.

27. (Cancelled).

28. (Cancelled).

29. (Cancelled).

30. (Cancelled).

31. (Cancelled).

32. (Cancelled).

33. (Cancelled).

34. (Cancelled).

35. (Cancelled);

36. (Cancelled).

37. (Cancelled).

38. (Cancelled).

39. (Cancelled).

40. (Cancelled).

41. (Currently amended) The method of claim 21 wherein the control parameters include a staging lookahead window parameter that sets a time period requirement prior to a scheduled playout of each of the local spots at which time the local spot must be staged on the central site server to be ready for reception by the one or more remote site servers.

42. (Cancelled).

43. (Currently amended) The method of claim 21 wherein the control parameters include a minimum transit time parameter that indicates a minimum transit time needed to transmit a particular one of the local spots to one or more remote site servers, such that [[when]] in response to the one or more remote site servers ~~determine~~ determining that a time until a next scheduled playout of the particular local spot is less than the minimum transit time, the local spot is considered to be dead.

44. (Previously presented) The method of claim 28 wherein the control parameters include a staging lookahead window parameter that sets a time period requirement prior to a scheduled playout of each of the local spots at which time the local spot must be staged on the central site server for reception by the one or more remote site servers.

45. (Cancelled).

46. (New) The method of claim 21 wherein the control parameters include a stage manager lookahead parameter that specifies a lookahead time to retrieve a queue table indicating a queue of spots to be staged, wherein the lookahead time is used in a determination of which of the local spots should be staged for transmission.